

Volume 09, Issue 51: Put a Lid on It

I should have published this at the start of the holiday season, but it is still relevant for us as we are still in the holiday season, approaching the tail end of it. I wanted to bring it up because I have been beating myself up for being sluggish this season, not being up to speed as I hoped I would be.

Let me start by saying that we don't need to beat ourselves up for not being our disciplined selves during the holidays. However, we still need to keep up healthy habits and honor our bodies. Wouldn't it be amazing to start the new year without the need for a grand resolution for your health? What if you could say on January 1st, "I did not go crazy with food this time, and I kept up some form of exercise throughout the holidays!"

Each year when the holiday season starts in late November for those in parts of the world where Thanksgiving is celebrated, and mid December for the rest of world who wait for Christmas time to start celebrating, all through to New Year's Day, many people throw self-control out the window. Is that you? Maybe you find yourself double-feasting on cakes and other special occasion treats as you move from party to party, while sleeping in too long to make it for your morning walk/run or to the gym. I witness this every other year when my gym is almost empty from mid December.

Ashley Armstrong wrote that we can still honor God with our bodies when life is stressful and full, especially around the holidays. Life is the ebb and flow of celebration and sorrow, weddings and funerals, running and rest. We cannot allow the season or the events on our calendar to dictate our health year after year. What we can do is control the pace of our lives with the help of the Holy Spirit and some well-established healthy habits.

Heading to Ashley Armstrong's advise, let's try something new this year and carry it through the years to come. When the holiday season starts, limit your over indulgence in food and continue exercising like normal - reinforce the habit of going to the gym or working out at home, but allow yourself to decrease the duration or intensity. It's all about maintaining the habit of exercise all year round. So, like me, give yourself grace and maybe work out 30 minutes as opposed to an hour. With that' you will still experience the benefits of stress-relief, calorie burning, and increased serotonin.

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Written by Lillian Chebosi

Saturday, 28 December 2019 20:55

When it comes to food, I have noticed from my own experience that taste buds do change and adapt to new options. After eating a certain way for awhile now, I am no longer drawn to a bite of processed foods and over sweetened cakes. But if you are not there yet, decide ahead of time exactly how you're going to "cheat." Even for where I am at, I often find myself over eating the good stuff during the holidays, which is not any better. Plan ahead of family get-togethers or social events and decide which food or beverage is "worth it" for you to indulge in. Eat your favorites and turn your back on the "just-okay" treats.

The other thing to remember is to protect your sleep. I went to a Christmas party at my sister's and they couldn't understand why I was ready to leave at 8pm! I was surprised because I usually leave her place by 5pm to enjoy the evening at home. They thought I would stay until midnight because it's Christmas. We left the kids there to continue enjoying time with their cousins. We later learnt that they were making it to bed at 4am!

I find myself ignoring my bedtime alarm during the holidays as when we are not home, dinners aren't served until almost 8pm, and when home, there are more conversations and laughs to be had, or another movie started a bit late. As this happens, the consequence is finding myself staggering my way toward my quiet time in the morning or ignoring the alarm in order to get an extra sleep cycle. This messes up my calendar from being late for my quiet time, late for my walk and gym workout, and late for relaxation activities - hence, some things don't get done or their duration gets slashed. But it's okay because it's the holidays, right? We get to cut ourselves some slack and take it easy, don't we? That said, give yourself plenty of sleep during the holiday season so you can have the time and energy to indulge in all your activities of choice.

When it comes to holiday shopping and splurging, plan ahead of time how much you are going to spend on things and gifts for yourself and those you love. It's important to plan for these things well in advance so that you enjoy yourself during the holidays. When you get to it, remain sensible, resist peer pressure and stick to your budget. Nothing is worth having a miserable January.

I believe the holidays isn't a time to be sloppy or to go crazy, it's a time to take in the things you enjoy without a rush and without feelings of guilt and regret afterwards. This is only possible if we exercise self control with food, exercise, sleep and shopping. Enjoy the holidays while remaining true to yourself.

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For His Glory,

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